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broadcast throughout California west of the Sierras. Last December I found them fairly numerous in the neighborhood of Pacific Grove and Monterey, where they were detected only among dense brush on shaded north hillsides or along clearings in the woods. The leaf-scratching habit gave the usual clue to their whereabouts. The five *Passerellas* collected, at once struck me as differing from those of the *townsendi* group in my collection from Southern California and from Central California east of the coast belt. Examination of all available material brings to light several more skins exactly like the Monterey specimens. These are all from the Santa Cruz District (Sierra Morena; Pescadero Creek.) None from elsewhere are comparable. So that here is apparently a race confined to a circumscribed *winter* habitat, far removed from its summer habitat.

Vigors, in the zoology of the voyage of H. M. S. Blossom, 1839, page 19, describes from Monterey a *Fringilla meruloides*, the brief description of which applies quite well to this form. He does not give any date of capture, but in accordance with my foregoing remarks, there can be little doubt but that it was the present race he had in hand. Therefore it may be called *Passerella iliaca meruloides* (Vigors), with the following description:

SUBSP. CHAR.—Most nearly like *Passerella iliaca insularis* Ridgway, but bill decidedly smaller and coloration throughout darker and browner.

TOPOTYPE—♀, No. 5056. Coll. J. G.; Pacific Grove, Monterey Co., California; Dec. 30, 1901

COLORATION—Top and sides of head, back, wings and tail, prout brown tending toward, seal brown; forehead and superciliary stripe, grayer; edgings of wings and tail, brightening toward walnut brown; maxillary region, sides and spotting on lower surface, prout brown tinged with burnt umber; flanks, bistre; lower tail coverts streaked with bistre and edged with isabella color; belly and remainder of lower surface, white; base of lower mandible, gallstone yellow.

MEASUREMENTS—Wing, 81 mm; tail, 75; culmen, 11; depth of bill, 8.25; tarsus, 25; hind toe with claw, 20.

I do not know what the extent of the summer habitat of this race is. I have no Alaskan specimens at hand like it. But judging from Ridgway's brief description, his *Passerella iliaca annectens* from Yakutat Bay, Alaska, is synonymous. If this is the case, then the form breeding in the Yakutat Bay district is this one which winters in the Santa Cruz district.

FROM FIELD AND STUDY.

A Criticism of Two Recent Records.—In the *Auk* for January 1902 are two Californian bird records that I believe to be erroneous. On page 80 Mr. Loomis states that the California Academy of Sciences has an example of *Micro-pallas whitneyi* collected by J. A. Kutsche April 20 1898 ten miles from San Bernardino. Mr. Kutsche obtained an owl of this species that came from Arizona, from R. B. Herron of San Bernardino, and we believe that it is the same owl recorded in the *Auk*.

On page 83 Mr. Loomis records a male *Eugenes fulgens* as having been taken by Kutsche in San Geronio Pass, Riverside County July 15, 1899. I believe this hummingbird was one obtained from Webster by Kutsche. If Mr. Loomis had known Kutsche as well as we southern Californians do, he would not have made these records.—FRANK STEPHENS, *San Diego, Cal.*

Occurrence of the Redpoll in California.—As new notes are always interesting, these are my observations on *Acanthis linaria*, recorded in the winter of 1899 near Eagle Lake, Lassen County, Cal. The redpoll arrived in my neighborhood on Nov. 30. At first I found only two large flocks, but later numerous smaller ones greatly increased their numbers. I ran into the first of these flocks, well in forest, a mile or so from a valley. The birds were circling about over the tree-tops, twittering noisily, much after the manner of *Spinus pinus*, and now and then they would settle into the upper branches of some pine, to be off again almost before the stragglers had reached it. Later the flock settled in the birches and bushes along a small stream, alighting all around me. The crops of seven birds shot here were gorged with buds from the birch shoots.

Late the same afternoon I found another flock out in the sage brush, three-quarters of a mile from the edge of the forest. These birds had been feeding on the tender buds of the sage. Their plumage was quite dirty. All through December flocks of redpolls could be found near

the stream in the pines where I first found them, and in the sage in one portion of the valley, but I failed to find them anywhere else. Of forty specimens of *Acanthis linaria* taken between November 30 and December 23, only seven were adult males in rosy plumage. J. M. WIL-LARD, *Oakland, Cal.*

Clangula hiemalis in Marin County, Cal. I wish to record a specimen of the old-squaw (*Clangula hiemalis*,) male hornot-shot in this county on Dec. 17, 1901 and sent to me for our collection. It is not an important record but these birds are not often taken in this locality. JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Geronimo, Cal.*

An Extension of the Southern Range of Perisoreus obscurus.—While collecting near Mendocino last summer I met a trapper who described to me this species and stated that it was not rare in the forests covering the more mountainous portions of the immediate country. The substance of his description was to the effect that the bird was a jay without a crest, grayish in coloration and with a white stripe through the eye. He had observed the species in the fall attacking venison which had been hung up in the forest. The carnivorous habits of the genus are characteristic and this statement greatly strengthens the identification. The species is evidently resident in southern Mendocino County. We have magnanimously left it to future exploration to make this record more authentic. EDMUND HELLER, *Riverside, Cal.*

Early Nesting of the Western Redtail.—On Feb. 14, 1902 I collected a set of two eggs of the western redtail (*Buteo borealis calurus*,) These were taken from a medium-sized nest fifty-one feet up in a sycamore, and were normal in size and markings. The hawks had secured a large piece of barley sack and with this made a lining for the nest, the eggs being covered by it. This is an early date for this locality and the eggs were fresh. Pacific horned owls are about as usual, sets of two being taken on Feb. 2 and 8. J. B. DIXON, *Escondido, Cal.*

A Partial Albino.—On Feb. 19, 1902, I shot an odd female partial albino California bi-colored blackbird (*Agelaius gubernator californicus*) in the willows bordering the salt marshes below Haywards, Cal. The tail has four white feathers, two on each side, while the right wing has two of the primaries white and the left wing one. Otherwise the plumage is normal. The right foot has but two toes, the middle one being gone. A few years ago an adult male redwing with its entire tail white was noted flying about the newly-sown grainfields near town. W. OTTO EMERSON, *Haywards, Cal.*

Notes From About San Francisco.—On Dec. 28, 1901 while collecting near San Bruno I came across a flock of twenty-five *Regulus satrapa olivaceus*. They were together in a large oak and were very tame, one male and two females being secured.

While skinning an immature *Larus philadelphia* I found a tapeworm about six inches long in the intestines. I also found one in a male *Passerella i. unalaschensis*; both taken Dec. 26, 1901.

On Feb. 2 and 15 I saw two *Sitta canadensis* in some fir trees in Golden Gate Park about one-half mile from the ocean, and on Dec. 27 a single specimen, all being very tame. J. R. PEMBERTON, *San Francisco.*

Additions to the List of Paicines Birds.—Since our list was published in THE CONDOR (III, No. 5) my brother and I have noted the following in that locality: gadwall (*Anas strepera*), two immature males captured; hooded merganser (*Lophodytes cucullatus*), a pair shot but not recovered; rusty song sparrow (*Melospiza m. guttata*), one specimen taken Dec. 8. Besides these a female hybrid was taken which seems to be a cross between a mallard and a cinnamon teal. This specimen's markings, color of bill and feet correspond very closely with those of the female mallard, while its size approaches that of the cinnamon teal. Hybrids are often found and are most probably the offspring of birds that have been crippled the year before, but seldom are they of such violent crosses. JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Geronimo, Cal.*

Birds Destroyed by Pools of Petroleum Along Railroads. The oil burning locomotive is now a factor in bird destruction. A helper engine having run short of water and not being enough to take her to the next tank, "headed in" on the house track where her engineer "killed" her to await being towed to a tank and while lying there she dropped a quantity of fuel oil on the track below. This amounted to probably eight or ten gallons which, after cooling off became very thick or about the consistency of black molasses. Into this native sparrows flew (probably mistaking it for water) and were killed in exactly the same way as a fly is killed on fly-paper. Since then I have noticed all along the right-of-way numbers of sparrows, desert (?) horned larks, kangaroo rats and other small birds and animals dead in the oil. Nearly all the engines drop oil along the track in different quantities, and I have seen four and five sparrows in a puddle the size of a cheese box. In a large puddle (the one referred to above) I counted fifteen dead in one day and each succeeding day added new victims. The birds would fly into the oil as they do in water for a bath and first their feet, next their wings and then their heads would sink into it and they would finally become entirely covered. OTTO HOLSTEIN, *Blake, Cal.*

The Passing of the Great Blue Heron at Santa Monica.—When I moved to Santa Monica in the fall of 1894 I had just about time to get used to the surroundings before the next collecting season, and found it the best outlook of any place I had ever been in. On the north are the Santa Monica mountains, on the south Ballona swamp and between the two a sloping mesa. Here, as one might expect, a great variety of birds is to be found.

On the north side of town, twenty-two miles distant, is a large canyon the bottom of which is completely covered with immense sycamores. Here on May 13, 1895 I found a colony of great blue herons nesting and counted in all about thirty-five nests, of which only three contained sets of four eggs each with incubation well advanced, a few young and the rest apparently deserted. The nests were placed in the tops of the tallest trees about seventy feet up and were composed entirely of sticks lined with a few sycamore leaves which I suppose fell into the nest from the branches above. The nests were as close together as nesting sites would permit and were all crowded in six or seven trees.

Every year the number of nests decreased until in 1900 only four nests were left, three of which were occupied, and in 1901 only one nest was to be seen and whether it was occupied or not I could not say as I only made one trip to the canyon. Next year I shall be surprised if any are there as the birds are being shot right along, although protected by the law. W. LEE, *Santa Monica, Cal.*

A Correction—The specimen upon which the record of *Colymbus auritus* from Mono Lake (CONDOR IV. p. 10) was based proves to be *Colymbus nigricollis californicus*. The bird is a young female and in some characters resembles *auritus*, but in its color and small size it is clearly referable to *californicus*. WALTER K. FISHER.

Fall Distribution of the Western Robin—In partial answer to Mr. Williams' inquiry in THE CONDOR Vol. III, No 6. I will state that *Merula m. propinqua* is very common along the low mountains of Sonoma and Mendocino counties in the months of August and September, when adults and young may be seen around the springs and cattle trough in good-sized flocks. In some years they are quite plentiful in Marin County, feeding on berries during the month of October, but I have never noted any at this time in juvenile plumage in this locality. Some years they seem to find food more plentiful elsewhere and do not come in here until well along into the winter. JOSEPH MAILLIARD, *San Geronimo, Cal.*

COMMUNICATIONS.

Editor THE CONDOR:

Will you kindly publish the manuscript I send herewith. The editor of *Science* cannot see his way to printing my rejoinder to Professor Clark's article which appeared a few days since in his journal. It involves a very important point in the relationships of birds.

Yours very sincerely,

R. W. SHUFELDT,
Fellow A. O. U.

PTERYLOSIS OF HUMMINGBIRDS AND SWIFTS.

In a recent issue of *Science* (Jan. 17, 1902, pp. 108, 109) Professor Hubert Lyman Clark publishes some interesting notes on the comparative morphology of the swifts, goatsuckers and hummingbirds (*Cypseli*, *Caprimulgi* and *Trochili*.) In this article Professor Clark makes extensive reference to a memoir of mine on 'Studies of the Macrochires' published some twenty years ago by the Linnæan Society of London (1888), and it seems to me has left unnoticed a number of facts that certainly should have been noticed in his contribution.

The title to this latter asks the question "Are Hummingbirds Cypseloid or Caprimulgoid"? to which, by no means difficult ques-

tion, I would reply that the hummingbirds are neither like the swifts nor are they like the goatsuckers, and decidedly less like the latter than they are like the former. As I have fully examined the *entire anatomy* of all three of these groups, it would seem that I am as well if not better, prepared to answer such a question had I only examined their pterylography, even though the latter examination included examples of every species of swift, goatsucker and hummingbird in the world known to science.

But it is only the pterylography of these several groups of birds that concerns us here, as there is no evidence before me that Professor Clark has investigated any other part of their morphology. Now Professor Clark admits in his article in *Science* that he is familiar with the memoir contributed to the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London for April 2, 1901, by Professor D'Arcy Thompson, entitled 'On the Pterylosis of the Giant Hummingbird (*Patagona gigas*)'. He admits that "No group of birds with which I am acquainted shows such remarkable uniformity in their pterylography as do the hummingbirds" (p. 109). Further, Professor Clark admits that "So far as I can see Professor Thompson's figures of *Patagona* would answer, almost without change for any of the 11 species I have examined;" he